



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

January 26, 2004

TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 3

944 Vanderperren Way • P.O. Box 28080
Green Bay, WI 54324-0080
Telephone(920) 492-5643
FAX(920) 492-7707
greenbay.dtd@dot.state.wi.us

PAULA VANDEHEY, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
CITY OF APPLETON
100 N. APPLETON STREET
APPLETON WI 54911

College Avenue Bridge
Project ID 4984-01-12

At the January 13, 2004 Municipal Services Committee Meeting several questions were addressed to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) regarding bridge funding and ownership.

The following are WisDOT's answers regarding these questions:

Bridge Funding

WisDOT's policy and practice has always included a cost share with local municipalities regarding local projects. At the last Municipal Services Committee Meeting, WisDOT staff explained that the department would seek a local share for a new two-lane bridge. While the department cannot compel the city of Appleton to participate, we continue to believe it is reasonable to expect local participation in a project of local interest. Absent local participation (cost share), WisDOT will fund the cost of a new two-lane bridge constructed to current standards.

WisDOT has no statutory authority to fund construction of a bridge wider than that necessary to meet two-lane standards. That standard is 36' clear roadway and 6' sidewalks. Any expansion beyond that, including construction of a four-lane bridge, would require city participation.

Should the city of Appleton choose the two-lane option, and subject to the city's interest, WisDOT is willing to investigate the possibility of designing a two-lane bridge with future convertibility to a four-lane bridge. The city would be responsible for both any added costs to provide for convertibility and any extra amenities that the city may desire for the new two-lane bridge during initial construction or in the future.

Ownership

State statutes require WisDOT to maintain the existing bridge. The bridge's structural condition, rehabilitation costs, and narrow widths compel WisDOT to conclude rehabilitation is not in the

public interest and that replacement is the only feasible option. WisDOT policy is to jurisdictionally transfer ownership of 84.10 bridges to the local unit of government upon replacement. WisDOT would retain ownership if the city elects not to take ownership of a new two-lane bridge. Please note also that WisDOT does not consider closure of the bridge to be a viable option and will not consider it; however, the department also considers the engineering needs of the bridge to be time-sensitive and plans to begin replacing the bridge in 2008 in order to avoid any potential closure of the bridge.

Funding responsibility for any future expansion of an initial two-lane bridge would belong to the City of Appleton. The city would also be required to assume ownership upon expansion.

FHWA

One remaining issue is the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) position regarding a two-lane bridge on the National Highway System (NHS). If a decision is made to construct a two-lane bridge, FHWA may object because of the NHS status. Any clarification and justification necessary to resolve federal objection to the building of a two-lane bridge would be the responsibility of the city.

As requested at the January 13th committee meeting, the department is also providing you with plan layouts showing two-lane and four-lane bridge impacts to the properties approaching the bridge. We anticipate these layouts will be available late Monday or early Tuesday.

Please contact me at your convenience with questions or should you wish to discuss this matter further. My colleagues and I plan to attend the January 27, 2004 Municipal Services Committee meeting and can also discuss this letter and answer questions at that time.

Sincerely,

Jim Lamers, PE
Project Development Supervisor

cc: Timothy Hanna, Mayor, City of Appleton
Earl Brooker, Alderperson/Chair Municipal Services Committee
Senator Michael Ellis
Representative Steve Wieckert